

WORLD HISTORY

10

- ✓ 9. The pyramids of ancient Egypt were (1) tombs (2) forts (3) storehouses for treasure (4) temples.
- ✓ 10. The government of ancient Egypt was (1) a democracy (2) a dictatorship (3) a city-state (4) a republic.
- ✓ 11. The ancient Egyptians worshipped (1) many gods (2) only Aton (3) the pyramids (4) fire.
- ✓ 12. Not characteristic of farming in ancient Egypt was (1) irrigation (2) the use of artificial fertilizer (3) slave labor (4) cultivation of wheat and barley.
- ✓ 13. A contribution of the ancient Egyptians to architecture was the (1) column (2) arch (3) stained-glass window (4) rounded dome.
- ✓ 14. The Rosetta Stone was (1) a symbol of the Pharaoh's authority (2) the keystone in the Great Pyramid at Gizeh (3) an island in the Nile delta (4) the key to translating hieroglyphics.
- ✓ 15. A major contribution of the ancient Egyptians was in the field of (1) law (2) printing (3) the calendar (4) philosophy.
- ✓ 16. Egypt was a major power in the ancient world for about (1) 100 (2) 500 (3) 1,000 (4) 2,000 years.

MATCHING QUESTIONS

Match the items in column A with those in column B.

Column A

1. Menes
2. Khufu
3. Ikhnaton
4. Hycsos
5. Champollion

Column B

- a. Introduced religious reforms
- b. Deciphered hieroglyphics
- c. Built the Great Pyramid at Gizeh
- d. Wrote the Book of the Dead
- e. United ancient Egypt
- f. Conquered ancient Egypt
- g. Constructed a canal connecting the Mediterranean and Red Seas

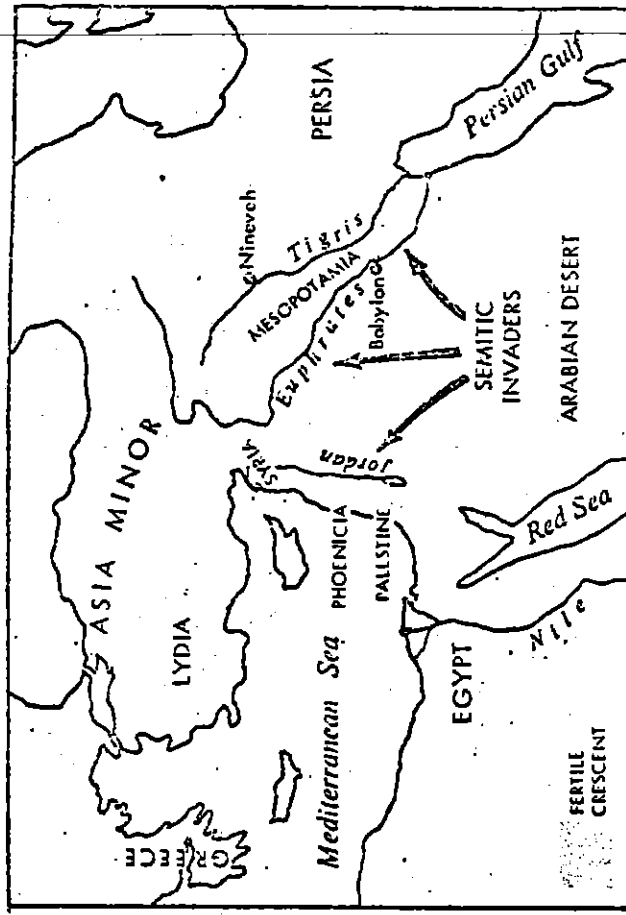
Part 3. Other Early Civilizations of the Middle East

THE FERTILE CRESCENT

While Egyptian civilization was developing in northeastern Africa, other civilizations were evolving in nearby southwestern Asia, chiefly in the *Fertile Crescent*. This region was so named because of its rich soil and half-moon shape. The Fertile Crescent was divided into (1) the eastern portion, consisting of the Tigris and Euphrates river valleys, called *Mesopotamia* (land between the rivers), and (2) the western, or Mediterranean portion. (See map, page 11.)

GEOGRAPHIC FACTORS INFLUENCING THE FERTILE CRESCENT

1. The Tigris and Euphrates Rivers. The waters of these rivers enriched the land in Mesopotamia, thereby encouraging nomads to settle and farm. As in Egypt, the need for dikes to control floods and for canals to irrigate farms led to the establishment of governments.



The Fertile Crescent: The Ancient Middle East

2. Mediterranean Coastline. As seaports developed along the Mediterranean coast, the people became seafarers. They built ships and traded throughout the Mediterranean area.
3. Lack of Stone. Lacking stone, the people used clay bricks for construction and clay tablets for writing.
4. Low Level Plains. The Mesopotamian plain and the Mediterranean coastal plain afforded no natural barrier against invasion. The inhabitants were therefore conquered repeatedly by invaders from the adjoining mountains and deserts. These newcomers remained in the region and contributed to its civilization.

LANGUAGES OF THE MIDDLE EAST

By analyzing sounds and their meanings, linguistic experts compare languages. They classify related languages into distinct families on the assumption that these languages probably evolved from one common (usually unrecorded) parent tongue. Linguists have classified most of the languages of the Middle East as either *Semitic* or *Indo-European*.

1. The Semitic family of languages was so named because the ancient peoples speaking these languages supposedly descended from a single Biblical

cal ancestor, *Shem*, son of Noah. The chief Semitic languages of the Middle East were *Babylonian*, *Hebrew*, *Phoenician*, *Arabic*, and *Assyrian*. Among modern Semitic tongues are *Hebrew* and *Arabic*.

2. The Indo-European family of languages was so named because these languages were spoken in the vast area from northern India to westernmost Europe. Indo-European languages of the ancient Middle East included *Lydian*, *Hittite*, and *Persian*. The languages of India, *Sanskrit*, *Bengali*, and *Hindi*, are also Indo-European, as are *Greek*, *Latin*, *French*, *Spanish*, *Italian*, *Russian*, *German*, and *English*.

A. PEOPLES OF EARLY MESOPOTAMIA

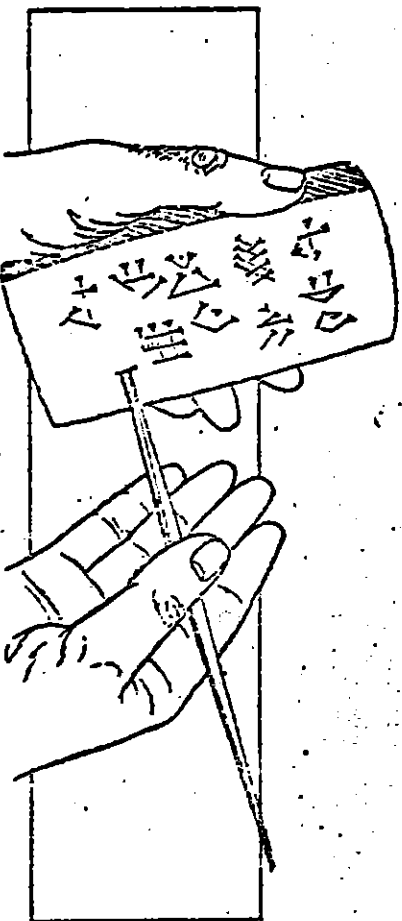
1. SUMERIANS

BRIEF HISTORY

The earliest-known people of the Fertile Crescent were the *Sumerians*. About 4000 B.C. they lived in southern Mesopotamia in a number of independent city-states. Each consisted of a small city and its surrounding area. The rulers of these city-states constantly warred with one another.

CONTRIBUTIONS TO CIVILIZATION

1. Cuneiform Writing. The Sumerians developed *cuneiform*, a system of writing about as old as Egyptian hieroglyphics. The Sumerians employed a sharp-pointed instrument (a *stylus*) to inscribe wedge-shaped characters on clay tablets. Reading and writing in cuneiform were difficult because the



Cuneiform Characters Being Inscribed on a Clay Tablet With a Stylus

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alphabet consisted of a great number of characters, about 550. Nevertheless, cuneiform was widely used in the Middle East for thousands of years.

The key to the deciphering of cuneiform was the *Behistun Rock*, which contains inscriptions in both cuneiform and Persian. The cuneiform was translated in 1846 by an Englishman, *Sir Henry Rawlinson*.

2. System of Numbers. The Sumerians developed a number system based on the unit 60. Today, we use this unit in telling time.

3. Architecture. The Sumerians invented the *arch* and built temple towers, or *ziggurats*. A ziggurat was a pyramidlike structure consisting of progressively set-back floors, the highest of which contained a shrine to the chief god.

2. BABYLONIANS

BRIEF HISTORY

Semitic-speaking invaders from the Arabian Desert entered southern Mesopotamia (1900 B.C.) and captured the city-state of Babylon. About 1750 B.C., led by their king, *Hammurabi*, they conquered the other city-states in the Tigris-Euphrates Valley and formed the *Babylonian Empire*. The *Babylonians* adopted and built upon the prevailing Sumerian culture. The Babylonian Empire lasted until 1700 B.C.

CONTRIBUTIONS TO CIVILIZATION

1. Code of Law. Guided by *Hammurabi*, the Babylonians recorded their laws and customs. This *Code of Hammurabi*, the oldest legal system known, reveals (a) a *stern sense of justice*—proclaiming the principle of "an eye for an eye" and demanding severe punishment for crimes, (b) a *sharp division of classes*—providing harsher punishment for an offense against a noble than for the same offense against a common person, (c) a *fair treatment of women*—permitting them to own property and engage in business, and (d) an *advanced business society*—establishing regulations for property protection, business contracts, interest on loans, and wages for workmen.

2. Astronomy. The Babylonians believed in *astrology*, the superstition that the movements of stars, planets, and other heavenly bodies directly affected the lives of men. However, by studying the heavens, they learned to recognize planets and to forecast eclipses, recording data later essential to astronomy.

3. Literature. The *Babylonian Epics*, which were partly based upon the Sumerian *Gilgamesh Legends*, describe the Creation, the first man, and the Great Flood. These stories resemble those in the Old Testament.

B. PEOPLES OF THE EASTERN MEDITERRANEAN

1. Hebrews

BRIEF HISTORY

From 1400 to 1200 B.C. Semitic-speaking *Hebrews* from the Arabian Desert gradually invaded and settled Palestine. For about 500 years, the Hebrews maintained their independence. In 722 B.C. the Assyrians conquered the *Kingdom of Israel* in northern Palestine. In 586 B.C. the Chaldeans overran the *Kingdom of Judah* to the south and exiled many of the inhabitants to *Babylon*. In 539 B.C. the Persians captured Babylon and allowed the Hebrew exiles to return to their homeland. Later, Palestine was controlled by the Greeks and still later by the Romans. In 70 A.D. the Roman armies under *Titus* suppressed a Hebrew revolt for independence and drove the people from their land. This expulsion partly explains why the Hebrews, or *Jews*, are presently scattered throughout the world. (Many Jews have returned to Palestine in recent years, especially after 1948, when part of the land became the independent Jewish state of *Israel*.)

CONTRIBUTIONS TO CIVILIZATION

1. Monotheism. The Hebrews were the first people to accept the belief in a single God as the all-powerful Creator and Supreme Ruler of the Universe.
2. Old Testament. The Hebrews recorded their history and religious beliefs in the *Old Testament*, the Hebrew Bible. One of the greatest literary masterpieces, the Old Testament constitutes the first part of the Christian Bible.
3. High Moral Principles. Judaism, the religion of the Hebrews, embodies precepts of ethical behavior that were far advanced for the ancient world and that are applicable in our own times.
 - a. The *Mosaic Law* is found in the *Torah*, the first five books of the Old Testament. This Law of Moses teaches "Love thy neighbor as thyself." It includes the *Ten Commandments*. Some of its rules of conduct are: "Remember the Sabbath day, to keep it holy"; "Thou shalt not kill"; "Thou shalt not steal"; "Thou shalt not bear false witness"; and "Honor thy father and thy mother."
 - b. The *Hebrew prophets* of the Old Testament cried out for social righteousness and a better world. They denounced evil and oppression, and demanded justice for the poor and weak. The prophet *Isaiah* envisioned a time when nations "shall beat their swords into plowshares" and shall not learn war any more." The prophet *Micah* asked, "What doth the Lord re-

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quire of thee, but to do justly, and to love mercy, and to walk humbly with thy God?"

The essence of Judaism, as summed up by the great teacher *Moses*, who lived at about the time of Jesus, is the rule of conduct: "What is hateful unto thee do not do unto others."

In its emphasis on monotheism and high moral principles, Judaism influenced Christianity and Islam (Mohammedanism).

FAMOUS HEBREWS (AS RELATED IN THE OLD TESTAMENT)

(1) *Moses* led his people from servitude in Egypt and gave them the *Ten Commandments*. (2) *Saul* united the 12 Hebrew tribes, led them against the Philistines, and became the first Hebrew King. (3) *David* slew Goliath, the Philistine giant, and later succeeded Saul as King. David wrote many *psalms* (sacred songs). One of the most famous begins, "The Lord is my shepherd; I shall not want." (4) *Solomon*, son of David, was a King renowned for his wisdom. He also built the splendid Temple at Jerusalem, the capital.

2. PHOENICIANS

BRIEF HISTORY

From 1200 to 800 B.C. the Semitic-speaking *Phoenicians* lived and prospered on the Mediterranean coast north of Palestine. Their chief cities were *Tyre* and *Sidon*. The Phoenicians, highly skilled shipbuilders and navigators, were seafaring merchants. They traded throughout the Mediterranean and even ventured to the Atlantic coasts of Europe and Africa. They established many overseas colonies; the most important was *Carthage* in northern Africa (see page 51).

From a species of shellfish, the Phoenicians obtained their trademark: a purple dye. Known as *Tyrian purple*, this became the favorite color of royalty.

CONTRIBUTIONS TO CIVILIZATION

1. "Missionaries of Civilization." The Phoenicians served as "missionaries of civilization," bringing eastern Mediterranean products and culture to less advanced peoples.
2. The Alphabet. The Phoenicians replaced the cumbersome cuneiform alphabet with a phonetic alphabet of only 22 letters. After further improvement by the Greeks and Romans, this alphabet became the one we use today.

3. ARAMEANS

BRIEF HISTORY

Semitic-speaking *Arameans* occupied Syria about 1200 B.C. and established a number of independent city-states; the most important was *Damascus*. By overland caravans, the Aramean merchants traded throughout the Middle East. But in the 8th century B.C. the Aramean city-states fell to the Assyrians.

CONTRIBUTION TO CIVILIZATION

Language. Spread by Aramean merchants and diplomats, *Aramaic* was used as the international language throughout the Middle East for over 1000 years. It was spoken by Jesus Christ and used in many Christian and Jewish religious writings.

4. LYDIANS

BRIEF HISTORY

After 1000 B.C. the Indo-European-speaking *Lydians* lived in *Asia Minor*, a region directly northwest of the Fertile Crescent. Between 612 B.C. and 546 B.C. the Lydians enjoyed great power and prosperity as merchants. *Croesus*, their King, was reputed to be the wealthiest man of ancient times.

CONTRIBUTION TO CIVILIZATION

Coinage of Money. The Lydian government was the first to mint coins and guarantee their value. Because these coins simplified business transactions, they replaced money minted by private individuals.

C. EMPIRE BUILDERS

1. HITTITES

BRIEF HISTORY

About 2000 B.C. the Indo-European-speaking *Hittites* appeared in northern *Asia Minor*, a region rich in iron. In 1650 B.C. the Hittites began building a powerful Empire. They extended their control in *Asia Minor*, seized northern Syria from the Egyptians, and expanded into northern Mesopotamia. Hittite

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culture was greatly influenced by their contacts with the Babylonians. The Hittite Empire lasted about 450 years.

CONTRIBUTION TO CIVILIZATION

Use of Iron. The Hittites were the first to make iron tools and weapons. Their knowledge of ironwork soon spread throughout the Fertile Crescent and Egypt.

2. ASSYRIANS

BRIEF HISTORY

After 800 B.C. the Semitic-speaking *Assyrians* from northern Mesopotamia embarked on a policy of expansion. Having learned about iron from the Hittites, the Assyrians were the first to outfit armies entirely with iron weapons. To besiege cities, they devised new military equipment—movable towers and battering rams. The Assyrians terrorized their enemies by deliberately employing *cruelty and violence*. They conquered the Fertile Crescent and Egypt, and established a great Empire with its capital at *Nineveh*. The Assyrian Empire lasted over 150 years, finally being destroyed in 612 B.C.

CONTRIBUTIONS TO CIVILIZATION

1. **Government.** The Assyrians (a) divided their Empire into provinces, each administered by a governor responsible to the King, and (b) built military roads to move troops quickly to any part of the Empire.

2. **The Library.** *Assurbanipal*, an Assyrian King, built a great library at Nineveh containing many thousands of clay tablets. These documents have enabled scholars to accurately reconstruct life in the ancient Middle East.

3. CHALDEANS

BRIEF HISTORY

In 616 B.C. the Chaldeans, Semitic-speaking nomads from the Arabian Desert, seized Babylon. In 612 B.C. they (with the Medes) captured Nineveh and overthrew the Assyrian Empire. The Chaldeans then gained control of the entire Fertile Crescent and established the *Second Babylonian Empire*. In 539 B.C. this Empire was overthrown by the Persians.

CONTRIBUTIONS TO CIVILIZATION

1. Architecture. During the reign of *Nebuchadnezzar*, the Chaldeans constructed the famous *Hanging Gardens* of Babylon. These roof gardens were noted as one of the great wonders of the ancient world.

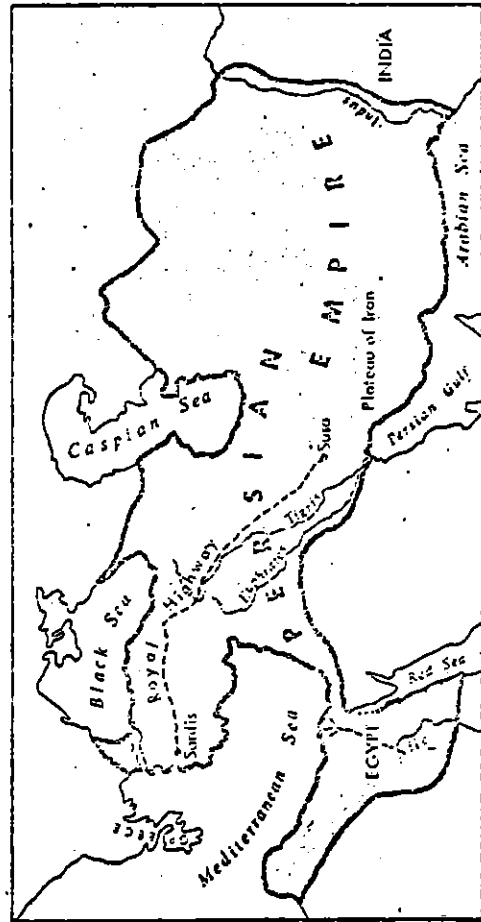
2. Astronomy. The Chaldeans continued the Babylonian practice of recording accurate observations of the heavens.

4. PERSIANS

BRIEF HISTORY

In 550 B.C. the Indo-European-speaking *Persians* lived east of the Fertile Crescent on the Plateau of *Iran*. Under *Cyrus the Great* (who ruled 559-529 B.C.), the Persians overthrew their kinsmen, the Medes, and ruled the entire Iranian Plateau. Thereafter, Cyrus conquered Lydia, Asia Minor, and the Fertile Crescent. Cyrus' son seized Egypt. Under *Darius* (521-486 B.C.), the Persians expanded their Empire eastward as far as the Indus River in northern India. (To the west, however, Darius failed to conquer the Greek city-states.)

The Persian Empire, the largest yet seen in the ancient world, extended 3,000 miles. (See map below.) The Empire flourished for 200 years, finally collapsing about 330 B.C. (see page 42).



The Persian Empire

CONTRIBUTIONS TO CIVILIZATION

1. Government. The Persians (a) divided their Empire into provinces, each ruled by a *satrap* (governor) responsible to the King, (b) appointed special agents, the *King's eyes and ears*, to check upon the loyalty of the satraps, (c) built numerous roads to speed military movements and trade, and (d) treated subject peoples *humanely* to avert revolt.

2. Spread of Culture. By maintaining their vast Empire, the Persians stimulated cultural interchange among their many peoples. The Persians adopted many features of these civilizations. However, they remained faithful to their own religion, *Zoroastrianism*.

3. Religion. The Persians accepted the beliefs of their prophet *Zoroaster*, who preached that: (a) *Ahura-Mazda*, the god of light and goodness, constantly fighting *Ahriman*, the spirit of darkness and evil. (b) Those supporting *Ahura-Mazda* by living virtuously will reach heaven; those following *Ahriman* will be punished in hell. (c) Goodness will eventually prevail, and the world will achieve eternal peace.

Zoroaster's teachings form the basis of the Persian bible, the *Avesta* or *Zand-Avesta*.

MULTIPLE-CHOICE QUESTIONS

1. The first civilization in the Fertile Crescent was developed by the (1) Assyrians (2) Arameans (3) Sumerians (4) Persians.
2. As the Nile was to Egypt, so were the Tigris and Euphrates to (1) Babylonia (2) Iran (3) Palestine (4) Asia Minor.
3. The chief building material used in the Fertile Crescent was (1) concrete (2) stone (3) clay brick (4) wood.
4. A Semitic language in modern use is (1) Greek (2) Assyrian (3) Hebrew (4) French.
5. Which of the following is not an Indo-European language? (1) Sanskrit (2) Persian (3) Persian (4) Arabic.
6. The Sumerians built *ziggurats*, which were (1) irrigation canals (2) religious shrines (3) royal palaces (4) large libraries.
7. The Babylonians are credited with having (1) possessed considerable legal and business ability (2) erected the largest buildings of ancient times (3) built a navy that dominated the Mediterranean (4) conquered India.
8. The Babylonians studied astrology because they believed that (1) man's fate was determined by the stars (2) other worlds existed (3) science was the basis of military power (4) the Old Testament required such study.
9. The Hebrew kingdom had a perilous existence because it (1) was situated between powerful rival states (2) was peopled by many different races (3) bore the brunt of the Greek attacks on Asia Minor (4) lacked a powerful navy.
10. The Hebrew capital and site of the famed Hebrew Temple was (1) Nineveh (2) Carthage (3) Damascus (4) Jerusalem.

11. The ancient conquerors who treated the Hebrews most humanely were the (1) Assyrians (2) Babylonians (3) Persians (4) Romans.
12. By predicting that nations "shall beat their swords into plowshares," the Hebrew prophet Isaiah was crying out for (1) more agriculture (2) government jobs for the unemployed (3) an era of world peace (4) greater effort to uncover mineral resources.
13. A Phoenician product particularly desired by monarchs was (1) purple dye (2) royal chariots (3) sunshades (4) iron weapons.
14. The Aramaic language spread throughout the Middle East because of Aramean (1) military conquests (2) religious leaders (3) merchants (4) astrologers.
15. Assyrian rule of conquered peoples was characterized by (1) making them allies (2) cruelty (3) granting them local self-government (4) tolerance and justice.
16. The Assyrian practice of appointing governors to rule separate provinces was adopted later by the (1) Persians (2) Lydians (3) Egyptians (4) Sumerians.
17. The Zend-Avesta was the sacred book of the (1) Babylonians (2) Persians (3) Sumerians (4) Hebrews.

MATCHING QUESTIONS

Column A

1. Hammurabi
2. Nebuchadnezzar
3. Zoroaster
4. Moses
5. Rawlison
6. Solomon
7. Cyrus

Column B

- a. Translator of cuneiform
- b. Founder of Carthage
- c. Arranger of oldest known legal code
- d. Lawgiver of Ten Commandments
- e. Founder of Persian Empire
- f. Persian god of light
- g. Ruler renowned for wisdom
- h. Builder of Hanging Gardens
- i. Prophet of the Persians

IDENTIFICATION QUESTIONS

For each description below, select the name of the people to whom it best applies, making your selection from the following list:

Arameans
Assyrians
Babylonians

Hebrews
Hittites
Lydians

Persians
Phoenicians
Sumerians

1. We were the first people to accept monotheism, and our prophets denounced evil and injustice.
2. Although we were known for our military, not scholarly pursuits, our extensive library has enabled modern scholars to reconstruct life in the ancient Middle East.
3. We developed cuneiform writing and also the number system still used in telling time.
4. A seafaring merchant people, we devised a simplified alphabet and were known as "missionaries of civilization."
5. We settled in Asia Minor, discovered iron ore deposits, and were the first people to make iron tools and weapons.
6. Our government was the first to mint coins, which replaced money minted by private individuals.